

IT WAS THE KIND OF NIGHT A WINNER WOULD GO TO, UNLESS
OF COURSE, HE HAD A FEW KAMELS WITH HIM.



KAMEL

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debut, out singer Yvette gives a thorough purging of emotions splatted out against a backdrop of very dated, overblown FM rock. With "blooze jams" galore, strings of clichés, and chug-a-lug guitars, Molli's Revenge give a lesbian take on cock-rock, belting out lines like "I wanna be your *pussy* cat." Fans of early Melissa may find something they like here, but it's doubtful. (Atlantic)—R.R.

Jocelyn Enriquez

Jocelyn

GROWING UP in San Francisco, 20-year-old Enriquez had her share of classical training, but the city's thriving club culture is clearly where she learned to get into the groove. "A Little Bit of Ecstasy" is bringing just a little bit of music-induced joy to the dance clubs of the world, much like her smash single "Do You Miss Me" did last year. Alison Moyet she's not; the Yaz cover ("Only You") was a terrible marketing mistake, if not so tedious as her ballad ("Even If"). The Filipino-American Enriquez also delves into her cultural heritage with "Kailanman," sung in Tagalog, one of the main languages of the Philippines. It's a nice touch, but when Enriquez sticks with the beat, she really turns up the heat. (Tommy Boy)—R.R.

Brand New Heavies

Shelter

THE BRAND NEW HEAVIES have got their groove back. With their last album, *Brother/Sister*, the band was on the verge of becoming esoterically irrelevant, still fixated on the '70s while the rest of the music world embraced jarring, emotionless electronica. Enter singer-songwriter Siedah Garrett ("Man in the Mirror"). Replacing N'Dea Davenport, Garrett brings a hook-laden pop sensibility to everything she touches with her cool *chica* voice and lyrical hand (especially "Sometimes," "You Are the Universe," and "Highest High"). It's still vaguely retro, but that's no longer the point. *Shelter's* sort of stylized throwback makes the Heavies timeless. (Delicious Vinyl)—ANDERSON JONES

Etta James

Love's Been Rough on Me and Her Best THE ACETYLENE CELLO VOICE of soulful diva Ms. Jamesetta Hawkins, a.k.a.

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WHAT TO GET FOR the circ

You can't go wrong with Snackwell's and CD singles. Consider one of the following party-perfect grooves with a twist:

- **Groove:** "Flood" by Jars of Clay (DMC). **Twist:** DJ Junior Vasquez's epic remix fools revelers at his club, Arena, into dancing to Christian rock.
- **Groove:** "Cloud Eyes (I'm Scared, You're Scared)" by Okumba Zoo (Arista). **Twist:** Two great tastes that taste astonishingly great together—dance and world music—courtesy of this groundbreaking South African trio.
- **Groove:** "Nightmare" by Brainbug (Groovilicious). **Twist:** An aggressive, cello-haunted instrumental that freaks out even the butchest of queens.
- **Groove:** "Busy Child" by The Crystal Method (Outpost). **Twist:** This cleverly named funk-inspired techno act could be America's answer to England's Chemical Brothers. As international clubbers go, the United States still makes the best chemicals.
- **Groove:** "Run to You" by Joi Cardwell (Eightball). **Twist:** Probably the only dyke diva heard at circuit parties, aside from cranky ol' DJ Susan Morabito. Cardwell, of course, is the more soulful.
- **Groove:** "Let Me Be Your Underwear" by Club 69 (Twisted America). **Twist:** Hoping for LaBouche-size mainstream success, Austrian house music savant Peter Rauhofer reworks his old chestnut—a.k.a. "The Sit on My Face Song"—with Eurotrashy disco flair.
- **Groove:** "Not Over Yet" by Grace (Reprise). **Twist:** Look out Kristine W: The U.K.'s Grace can write actual songs that double as dance-floor anthems. Soul man Danny Tenaglia provides the "drug-and-bass" remixes.
- **Groove:** "Hideaway" by De'Lacy (Deconstruction/RCA). **Twist:** An "I Will Survive" for the co-dependent '90s. "I supply my *own* security," proclaims the spunky diva.

—JAMES PATRICK HERMAN

Etta James, burns right through to basics. When she cautions "Love It or Leave It Alone" or beams on to a line she wrote—"what's done in the dark will come to the light"—it's time to get *serious*! If it's true that, as the title tune promises, "time heals a broken heart," James' hurting honk will break it all over again. And just how very fine she has *always* been can be heard on the new retrospective, *Etta James: Her Best*, an absolutely indispensable treasure lode packed with "At Last," "A Sunday Kind of Love," "My Dearest Darling," "Stop the Wedding," "Something's Got a Hold on Me," those sweet kisses on "If I Can't Have You," and much more. Classic, hot, soulful popular music doesn't get any better. (Love's Private Music; Best: MCA/Chase)—ANDREW VELEZ

Kevin Oldham

Piano and Vocal Music

AIDS HAS ROBBED countless young musicians of the chance to achieve their full artistic potential. One such loss was Kevin Oldham, who died four years ago at age 33, a virtuoso pianist and a composer whose impassioned

spirit was at odds with the impersonal machinations of modernism. As a performer, Oldham favored the grand Romantic tradition, and that same tendency is evident in his music. This disc intersperses piano works (lovingly played by his friend Karen Kushner) with vocal selections, and what emerges is a developing voice that—while never stooping to maudlin self-pity—is urgent and expressive. (Albany Records)—K. ROBERT SCHWARZ

Meredith Monk

Volcano Songs

WHAT WORDS CAN DESCRIBE Meredith Monk? After all, she composes, sings, choreographs, and directs theatrical vocal works that deliberately eschew words. Instead of language, she has invented an arsenal of unearthly vocal techniques, all so evocative as to suggest imagery and meaning without ever specifying them. Mesmerizingly obsessive, Monk's melodies unfold like a ritualistic incantation, at once modern and ancient in their resonance. *Volcano Songs* includes some surprising departures: a haunting "New York Requiem"